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FULL STORY ▶

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Alum Featured in Upcoming BBC Documentary

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Professor to Muse on Movies During VPR's Annual Oscar 'Switchboard'

Events Celebrate International Women's Day

THE WEEK IN VIEW

March 3, **7:30 p.m. The Lane Series presents the Miami String Quartet. Music Building Recital Hall. Information: 656-4455.**

March 4, **8 a.m. Women's Studies presents a "Student Conference on Race and Gender." Waterman, Room 427A. Information: 656-4282**

March 6, **4 p.m. John M. Hughes, associate provost for research & scholarship and dean of the graduate school at Miami (Ohio) University, will host an open forum as part of the interview process for the provost position. Billings, North Lounge. Information: provost search**

March 7, **6 p.m. Students for Peace and Global Justice host a Colombian union leader who will explain Coca Cola's labor practices in his country. Williams Building 301. Information: 264-5416**

March 9, **5 p.m. A Writers' Workshop featuring Robert Pinksy, poet and professor in the graduate writing program at Boston University and winner of an unprecedented three terms as Poet Laureate of the United States. Redstone Music Hall. Information: speakers**

Bridges to Biotechnology

By Jennifer Nachbur
Article published Feb 28, 2006

Alum Mark Brann (L), founder of Acadia Pharmaceuticals, talks with graduate student Joshua Farb about taking an idea to the marketplace. *(Photo: Rajan Chawla)*

Beneath the lab coats, microscopes, pipettes and vials of UVM's many biomedical research labs, there's an entrepreneurial undercurrent that's been running through campus for years. For many faculty and even some students, scientific discoveries can lead to patents and products that provide the foundation for international biotechnology corporations.

Whether or not you're a scientist, you have likely experienced the end product of some scientist's biomedical discovery. It could be a blood test that measures cholesterol, a screening test for a specific disease, or a cutting-edge drug treatment. And it could have been developed here at UVM.

Mark Brann's company Acadia Pharmaceuticals develops treatments for central nervous system disorders. His story is just one of several examples of successful "technology transfer" – the movement of ideas, inventions and discoveries from the research lab into the commercial sector – at UVM.

It all started when Brann was working on his Ph.D. in pharmacology at the College of Medicine. Early in his career, he developed molecular tools that paved the way for drugs now used to treat Alzheimer's disease. Later research, directed by Brann at the National Institutes of Health, resulted in a patented process for identifying whether drugs were achieving their targeted effects. He attempted to start up a business, but it never got off the ground. In 1991, he returned to UVM as an associate professor of psychiatry and pharmacology.

Brann credits his start-up failure in Maryland for his start-up success in Vermont, where in 1993, following extensive efforts to garner investment capital and other funding, Receptor Technologies was incorporated.

"Being inquisitive and taking risks makes a good scientist and entrepreneur," says Brann, who received the College of Medicine's first Graduate Alumni Award last month in honor of his outstanding research achievements.

Though the drug screening technology Brann and colleagues developed in their Winooski headquarters was successful (it's being used in Acadia's clinical trials today), its Vermont location limited access to new investors and scientists. So, when European investors pushed for the company to relocate, Brann moved the company to San Diego in 1997, changed its name, set up a second facility in Denmark and shifted the focus to drug discovery.

In 2004, the company went public. As president and chief scientific officer at Acadia, Brann concedes his role has evolved from focusing on science to

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focusing on stockholders. “That is the nature of the beast,” he admits.

A critical link to success

For UVM researchers ready to wade into commercial waters, Todd Keiller, director of technology transfer at UVM, is the critical link. The founder of six biotechnology companies, Keiller is something of an intellectual property superhero. He works to protect, market and negotiate the sale of rights of patentable inventions – whether tangible or conceptual – to business partners that can bring the property to market. Keiller collaborates with multiple partners at UVM, including the Office of Sponsored Programs, Vermont Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), the Vermont Technology Council, and the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies, as well as the Vermont Department of Economic Development.

One of Keiller’s more recent tech transfer success stories involves the work of Dr. Benjamin Littenberg, the Henry and Carleen Tufo Professor of Medicine. With support from the National Institutes of Health, Littenberg has been leading the team that developed and tested a program called the Vermont Diabetes Information System. He and two College of Medicine faculty colleagues were encouraged to form a company called “Vermont Clinical Decision Support” to distribute software and other approaches to improving chronic care that they developed as part of their research project. The Vermont Diabetes Information System – the initial product – is currently in use by thousands of adults with diabetes (and their primary care providers) in Vermont and nearby areas.

“Our system communicates with both patients and their providers, via mail and fax, to help them interpret laboratory tests, remember to obtain tests when needed, and keep track of the patients' health status,” says Littenberg. “Ultimately, the system is designed to reduce the long-term complications of diabetes.”

Tech transfer and intellectual property on the rise

Littenberg’s experience is just one example of the rapidly accelerating level of activity in UVM’s tech transfer and intellectual property arena.

“Of the 53 patents issued to the University of Vermont since 1979, 22 were issued in the past 3 years,” says Keiller. “In addition, over 20 licenses have been signed with diverse local, regional, national and international companies.”

Others among the ranks of successful faculty biomedical technology entrepreneurs include:

Mark Allegretta, who received his Ph.D. in cell biology from UVM in 1990, is a research assistant professor of pathology and president and chief scientific officer of BioMosaics, Inc. Headquartered in UVM incubator space on Spear Street, the company researches, develops and commercializes patented biomarker tests for the early detection and management of cancer, with a current focus on liver cancer. Dr. Richard Albertini, professor emeritus of medicine and microbiology and molecular genetics and a research professor of pathology, serves as Biomosaic’s executive vice president of research. He has spent most of his career researching the detection of mutations in the body’s immune cells and developed the T-Cell Cloning Assay offered as a contract service through Biomosaics.

Kenneth Mann, professor emeritus of biochemistry, is an international leader in the field of blood clotting research and holds seven patents related to the diagnosis and study of functions that are critical in normal blood coagulation. Early in his career at the Mayo Clinic, he made his first major discovery — the isolation and characterization of factor V, a blood-clotting factor that had defied isolation efforts for almost forty years. Among his most notable inventions is a synthetic “plasma” mixture made up of proteins and membranes, designed to provide a clearer understanding of what regulates blood coagulation. Mann currently has 10 additional patents pending.

Note: The Office of Technology Transfer will be hosting an Invention to Ventures conference at the Sheraton Burlington Hotel & Conference Center on April 21. Members of industry, UVM researchers and students are encouraged to attend. John Abele, founder and chairman of Boston Scientific Corporation, will deliver the keynote address, John Evans, dean of the College of Medicine,

will be the luncheon speaker, and the conference will feature awards presentations and a number of panels and workshops.

For more information about technology transfer at UVM go to technology transfer or tech tran or call 656-4067.

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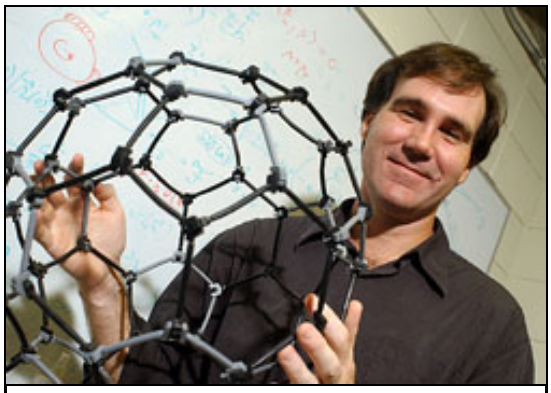
Hurricane on the Nanoscale

By Joshua Brown
Article published Mar 01, 2006



Dennis Clougherty, professor of physics, made a recent discovery that may provide fresh understanding of the bizarre microscopic world of superconductors, buckyballs, and other so-called complex solids. *(Photo: Sally McCay)*

He's never seen one. Nobody has—yet. But Dennis Clougherty, professor of physics, believes he's found something new to physics. He calls it's a "Jahn-Teller soliton," and his prediction about this strange form of matter, recently published in Physical Review Letters, may provide fresh understanding of the bizarre microscopic world of superconductors, buckyballs, and other so-called complex solids.

A soliton may be best explained by example. To find one you can see, travel to the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia. There, when the tide comes in, an odd wave called a tidal bore starts to move. This wall of water travels up low-lying rivers maintaining a steep slope—and flowing overtop the outgoing river water—for many miles at a constant speed without losing its form.

Another soliton can be found in Queensland, Australia. There, tubular clouds will develop, sometimes 600 miles long, that keep their shape even as they travel at 30 or more miles per hour. Other solitons include undersea waves that get pushed out from the Gulf Steam and travel thousands of miles through the ocean without dissipating. Tornadoes and hurricanes are examples too.

"These are all classical solitons," says Clougherty, "but solitons also exist at the level of the electron." And he believes he has found a new one at this smallest of scales, thousands of times smaller than a hair. His paper describes a "lump of excess electric charge in periodic motion," maintained within the crystal structure of some ceramics and other complex materials. In other words, a kind of electric hurricane on the quantum scale.

"People are trying to understand why you get these kind of domains, these regions of inhomogeneity," Clougherty says. "One possible explanation is that there is 'dirt' in these samples, maybe some kind of chemical contaminant." But his models show something much more remarkable and elegant at work.

"What I am pointing out is that it is possible intrinsically, even in a pure sample, to have these kinds of inhomogeneities," he says. "It turns out to be a non-linear system."

A high degree of difficulty
A soliton at any size depends on a non-linear system of forces, meaning that when a substance is disturbed, whether water or wind or the electrons in superconducting yttrium barium copper oxide, the response is not in proportion to the disturbance. Instead, it continues unabated and nearly indefinitely. Crudely put, non-linear systems are more than the sum of their parts. This, of course, creates headaches for mathematicians and modelers,

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but non-linearity is at the root of effects like superconductivity, where electric charge moves without losing any juice.

If a soliton is strange, then the Jahn-Teller effect is one of the most difficult phenomena in physics. One way to describe it is as a geometrical distortion of the electron cloud around an atom in material where electrons can “choose” between several orbits of the same energy. Clougherty’s work shows that in some solids these off-kilter electrons, combined with a tweaking of the crystal “lattice” formed by the nuclei, keeps electric charge in splotches, despite the electrons’ natural inclination to separate from each other.

“This distortion of the lattice provides a mechanism for describing something called the structural phase transition,” Clougherty says. “There are lots of materials that have two different crystal structures, and you can go from one to the other by changing its environment, like the temperature.”

“There are several theories about the dynamics of how to go from one structure to another as the temperature is changed, and typically these kinds of structural phase transitions require everything to happen all at once,” he says. “But I think it’s possible that you might get a little domain with a warping of the structure inside this Jahn-Teller soliton, and as the temperature drops, the size of the soliton grows and eventually incorporates the entire sample.”

“So you’d have three phases,” he says, “the high temperature structure, the low temperature structure, and in between there would be a gas of solitons.”

Keith Johnson, a physicist at MIT and Clougherty’s advisor when he was a graduate student, notes that this paper is more than just gee-whiz theorizing. “Dennis’s work is very relevant to material science,” he says. It promises to provide a better framework for understanding some of the puzzling properties of electronic and optical materials that emerge from laboratories. Among these are superconductors like the ones used in MRI scanners, and fiber optic cables. Clougherty speculates that his work might have application in the current effort to build “quantum computers” that could store data at the scale of the electron.

Taking it to the lab

Now the trick is to test his mathematical model in the lab. “It’s never been observed in nature, but I’m hoping it will be,” he says. “I am hoping people will do careful experiments on these materials and find them.”

In his paper, Clougherty proposes several ways to see these Jahn-Teller solitons. “Inside the soliton you’d expect to see a distortion of the lattice,” he says. “That is something that can be seen with X-ray images.” Or, the splotches of excess electric charge in the soliton could be measured with an electron microscope.

“Publications in Physical Review Letters, especially for a theorist, are rare, and Dennis is absolutely a stunning top-drawer theoretical condensed matter physicist,” says Ken Golden, UVM professor of mathematics, who has worked with Clougherty. “I’d love to see UVM build up its physics program around Dennis.”

Clougherty will be presenting his theory this month at a meeting of the American Physical Society and has been invited to give a talk in August at the International Center for Theoretical Physics in Trieste.

“His work is very exciting,” MIT’s Keith Johnson says, “What he’s doing now is predicting something entirely new.”

Peace and Justice

By Jon Reidel
Article published Mar 01, 2006

Seniors Caroline Ballou and Colin Robinson were instrumental in bringing fair trade coffee to the Marché in Living & Learning. *(Photo: Bill DiLillo)*

When Caroline Ballou and Colin Robinson graduate in May they won't have solved world hunger, convinced Americans to buy and sell fair trade products, or have ensured a livable wage. They will leave the university knowing that their efforts, along with the 28 other active members of Students for Peace and Global Justice, had measurable impacts on the local community.

Perhaps the most palpable on-campus change brought about by SFPGJ, a self-described coalition of students with the intent of promoting dialogue and awareness of issues around global justice, peace, and equality, is the decision by Sodexho to serve 100 percent fair trade coffee at the Marché in Living & Learning and other campus locations. Robinson says the fair trade issue is a good example of SFPGJ's ability to take a global issue and give it local impact.

"We all feel a global responsibility; an interconnectedness with people around the world," says Robinson. "A lot of the same issues like livable wages that affect people all over the world, also affect people in Burlington and at the university. When we started we had a lot of big issues, but we found that it's better to have some specific actions instead of broad issues."

In addition to trying to get more fair trade food products such as bananas and chocolate on campus, the SGA-recognized club, started in 2003 in response to what Robinson calls a "xenophobic and visceral response" to the attacks of September 11, is trying to bring a national Fair Trade Conference to the university later this year. The club has also been a strong presence at trustees meetings in lobbying the university to give a livable wage to all employees. This has been particularly interesting for Robinson, a member of the John Dewey Honors Program who served as student trustee for a year-and-a-half.

"It's been interesting to see how things work from both sides of the table," says Robinson, who is currently organizing a trip by Sen. Barack O'Bama's (D-Ill.) to Ira Allen Chapel on March 10 as Congressman Bernie Sanders' campus campaign coordinator. "I have a tremendous amount of respect for the trustees and for Dan Fogel, who I think is very well intentioned and has an extremely difficult job. Being on the board gave me a tremendous amount of pride for how good this university, but also how good it could become. That said, we have to hold the board to a high standard and make sure they walk the walk."

Wide ranging initiatives
The club, which has 210 members on its listserv, has also been very active in the local community. Ballou helped organize a hunger banquet that raised money for Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf and Oxfam, and raise awareness about hunger. Participants were put into high-, middle- and lower-class categories with the lower class receiving smaller meals and worse conditions.

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Ballou said people placed in the lower-class category ate on the floor and expressed feelings of resentment towards their upper class counterparts, many of whom felt guilt over not sharing their food.

SFPGJ also brought Bangladeshi workers to the university to share their experiences working in inhumane conditions. Club members have also taken their cause beyond state lines by making trips to other countries and to Fort Benning, GA, for the annual School of Americas Protest. One of the newer initiatives, spearheaded by Natalia Fajardo, calls into question the treatment of employees by Coca Cola and sale of its products on campus. The club also helped organize a mock worker's rights board hearing with Rep. Sanders serving as chairman.

Ballou and Robinson say that although many students don't participate in their events, most of them are supportive of similar issues. "One thing that unifies this campus is that it has a strong social conscience even though it manifests itself differently," says Robinson. Both seniors say they feel their causes are in good hands, as many of the younger members are very active.

"The seniors leaving that group have been exemplary leaders," said Sodexho's Melissa Zelazny, general manager of university dining services, who worked with SFPGJ on the fair trade issue. "It set the tone for future initiatives. They've been able to pass it on in a very progressive nature and have been leaders in the university's commitment to social justice and to being an environmental university."

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Mar 01, 2006

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School of Business Wins Microsoft Research Grant

Feb 22, 2006

The School of Business Administration and the School of Engineering have been awarded a two-year grant by Microsoft Research to further incorporate and evaluate the contribution of tablet PCs to the learning outcomes of students in business and engineering.

University Looks to Improve Position in RecycleMania Contest

Feb 14, 2006

After one week of RecycleMania, an event that pits 80 colleges and universities against each other to see which one is the best at recycling, UVM is well behind it 8th-place finish of 2005.

English Professor Breaks Down New Book on Horror Films

By Corey Christman
Article published Feb 28, 2006

A small, but intimate group of horror film enthusiasts gathered at Barnes & Nobles in South Burlington on February 22 to listen to Tony Magistrale, professor of English, talk about his new book, *Abject Terrors: Surveying the Modern and Postmodern Horror Film*.

The book, an in-depth look at the history of the horror film genre, focuses on some of the first horror films ever made, which were also among the first films of any kind, because "film (in the 1930s) was a medium designed to startle," said Magistrale. Some of those films, such as "Nosferatu," "Frankenstein," and "Dracula," drew deeply from the gothic novels of the 19th century. The Film horror genre is remarkable for its "self-cannibalism," he said, in that horror films tend to retell and reuse the same stories and tropes, with their base rooted in the 19th century tradition of the gothic novel. There have been 36 versions of the story of "Jekyll and Hyde," for example.

Like the literature Magistrale teaches, horror films produced each decade greatly reflect the social and political atmosphere in which they were made. The earliest ones reflect the concern about the growing power of fascism through the depiction of an evil monster that must be destroyed through the power of the people. The 1950s saw the merging of horror with other genres such as science fiction in films like "The Thing" and "Them," which illustrated a nervousness about nuclear power with faith in science.

Film changed in the beginning of the 1960s, due in large part to the works of Alfred Hitchcock and films like "Psycho." By the early 1970s, Magistrale said films like "The Exorcist" and "Rosemary's Baby" portrayed the growing concern over the disruption of family life and a loss of religious faith. By the end of the decade, advances in special effects, make-up and robotics turned horror films into slasher films in which the monsters were predominantly young adult males with blank or masked faces, who were noticeably silent. Magistrale argues that the blank rage they expressed mirrored a social atmosphere of masculine frustration and powerlessness in response to the feminist movement, and in the wake of Vietnam.

The 1980s belonged to Stephen King and films like "The Shining," "Cujo," and "IT." The following decade took the blank rage of the 1970s slasher pictures and manifested it in a fascination with serial killers. As media coverage swarmed around people like Geoffrey Dahmer, films like "Seven" and "Silence of the Lambs" reflected the near mythic status serial killers earned, he said.

Magistrale closed his talk with a look at the most recent manifestation of the horror genre, which he said is being pulled in two directions: East with remakes of Japanese films such as "The Ring" and "The Grudge;" and towards recovery in a post-9/11 world. The latter focuses on our fear of the collapse of buildings and the end of the world, portrayed in films like "The Village" and "War of the Worlds."

Because "film is like dreaming while you're awake," Magistrale said it's important to examine the subconscious urges that lie outside of reason expressed by the horror genre. It is by facing fear, he said, that most often it can be destroyed or overcome.

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One of America's rising political stars, U.S. Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.), will give a talk entitled, "Taking Back Our Country in 2006," at Ira Allen Chapel on March 10.

Considered a future presidential candidate, O'Bama is making his first appearance in Vermont in support of Rep. Bernie Sanders, who is running for U.S. Senate in 2006. O'Bama, keynote speaker at the 2004 Democratic Convention, will take questions along with Sanders following his talk in an open forum-style format.

Senior Colin Robinson is coordinator of the event, which is free and open to the public. "Senator O'Bama is one of the most exciting and dynamic political leaders in the nation," said Paul Hortenstine, Sanders' communication director. "We're honored that he is coming to Vermont to express his support for Representative Sanders."

Obama, a civil rights attorney, was elected to the U.S Senate in 2004 with a promise of promoting economic growth and bringing good paying jobs to Illinois. He is a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee and the Veterans' Affairs Committee. During his seven years in the Illinois state Senate, Obama focused on helping working families by creating programs like the state Earned Income Tax Credit, which provided over $100 million in tax cuts in three years.

Born in 1961 in Hawaii to Barack Obama, Sr., and Ann Dunham, Obama graduated from Columbia University in 1983. He moved to Chicago in 1985 to work for a church-based group seeking to improve living conditions in poor neighborhoods. He graduated from Harvard Law School in 1991 where he was the first African American editor of the Harvard Law Review. Obama and his wife, Michelle, married in 1992 and live on Chicago's South Side with their two daughters, Malia, 7, and Sasha, 4.

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Uday Sukhatme, dean of the college of arts and sciences and professor of physics at State University of New York at Buffalo, said at an open forum on March 23 in Billings' North Lounge that if chosen provost, he would focus on developing niches of excellence, expanding international opportunities for students, maximizing university resources, and, most importantly, work to achieve the goals of the faculty and staff.

“I truly see an administrator’s job as being a facilitator of aspirations, not dictating what these aspirations are,” said Sukhatme, the second of five finalists to hold a forum as part of the interview process to succeed Senior Vice President and Provost John Bramley. “I am not familiar with some of the specific challenges you face at UVM, but I resonated with many aspects of your vision.”

Sukhatme, who received his doctor of science degree in theoretical physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1971, spoke extensively about the importance of faculty-driven ideas contributing to the success of an institution. At the University of Buffalo, Sukhatme said he “asked faculty to dream big” about what needs they saw as critical to advancing their respective colleges, whether it be new faculty or seed money for a new program. “Money is best used closest to the place it’s spent,” he said.

Faculty members came up with 45 suggestions, which they vetted to 15. That number was eventually cut to five using academic soundness as the main criterion. Sukhatme said all five suggestions have been funded and that they are now funding a dozen of them. In order to pay for some of the requests, Sukhatme pitched them to potential donors who may have a particular affinity for a specific project. One of the main requests was for more faculty members. As dean of the college of arts and sciences, Sukhatme said he helped hire approximately 80 new faculty to bring the number within the college to a near-record high of 480.

Sukhatme, who served as head of the physics department and interim vice provost for academic affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago before assuming his present position at Buffalo, said universities must establish “niches of excellence,” and UVM seems to have established itself as a strong environmental school. He also stressed the importance of showcasing to the public the different types of research at the university and how it could improve society.

A 1964 graduate of the University of New Delhi, where he received a B.Sc. in mathematics, Sukhatme stressed the importance of an international experience as part of an undergraduate education. “An undergraduate education is incomplete without an international component,” he said. “Students need to know what’s happening in the world. There are ways to pay for studying abroad through challenge grants and other means. It doesn’t have to be available just to those with wealth.”

John M. Hughes, associate provost for research & scholarship and dean of the graduate school at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, will host a forum on March 6 at 4 p.m. in North Lounge, Billings.

For more information on the provost search, visit the provost search website.

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EVENTS

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Alum Featured in Upcoming BBC Documentary

Feb 28, 2006

The BBC documentary, “Secrets of Myan Underworld,” featuring UVM alum Sam Meacham '90, will be shown on March 3 at 1:30 p.m. in 104 Aiken.

Professor to Muse on Movies During VPR’s Annual Oscar 'Switchboard'

Mar 01, 2006

Film professor Hilary Neroni is still doing her homework. She’s seen most of the movies nominated for Academy Awards this year, but by the time she joins filmmaker Jay Craven and Vermont Public Radio’s Neal Charnoff on his annual Oscar program March 2, she’ll be ready, slipping in Transamerica and Munich just under the wire. For Neroni, whose work generally takes a more scholarly approach to film, going on Switchboard to analyze the Oscars is pure fun.

Events Celebrate International Women’s Day

Mar 01, 2006

A number of events are scheduled in celebration of International Women’s Day on March 8, a day for commemorating and celebrating nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

Student Conference to Tackle Race and Gender

Mar 01, 2006

ALANA U.S. Ethnic Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies will host a student conference on race and gender on March 4 in 427 Waterman.

Top Cats Plan Harmonious Reunion

Feb 21, 2006

As the alumni of the UVM Top Cats prepared for their 25th anniversary concert, there may have been a few trips to the tailor to let out the tux. Understandable, it’s been more than a couple of decades since some of these guys last harmonized on the Ira Allen Chapel stage.

Burack Lecturer to Discuss Oil Economics

Feb 22, 2006

Richard Heinberg, a core faculty member at the New College of California, will speak on “Peak Oil: Challenges and Opportunities at the End of Cheap Oil” on March 2 in Ira Allen Chapel at 7:30 p.m.

Alum Featured in Upcoming BBC Documentary

By The View Staff
Article published Feb 28, 2006

The BBC documentary, “Secrets of Myan Underworld,” featuring UVM alum Sam Meacham '90, will be shown on March 3 at 1:30 p.m. in Aiken, 104.

Meacham, an independent filmmaker, will be on hand to answer questions about the documentary, which explores the mysterious role and impact of “sacred wells” or cenotes, on ancient Mayan civilization. Cenotes are enigmatic crystal-clear pools of water that dot the Yucatan Peninsula.

Since the 1980s, more than 100 cave systems and 620 kilometers of flooded cave passageways have been explored and mapped in the area now known as Riviera Maya, just south of Cancun. Meacham, director of the Quintana Roo Aquifer System Research Center (CINDAQ), has spearheaded these efforts in collaboration with hydrologists, geologists, archaeologists, biologists and other experts to unlock some of the mysteries of the Yucatan’s underground waterways.

Information: 656-2695.

Bridges to Biotechnology
Beneath the lab coats, microscopes, pipettes and vials of UVM’s many biomedical research labs, there’s been an entrepreneurial undercurrent among faculty that is producing scientific discoveries and leading to patents and products that provide the foundation for international biotechnology corporations.

Hurricane on the Nanoscale
Dennis Clougherty, professor of physics, believes he’s found something new. He calls it a “Jahn-Teller soliton,” and his prediction about this strange form of matter may provide fresh understanding of the bizarre microscopic world of superconductors, buckyballs, and other so-called complex solids.

Peace and Justice
When Caroline Ballou and Colin Robinson graduate in May they won’t have solved world hunger, convinced people to buy fair trade products, or have ensured a livable wage, but they will leave knowing that their efforts, along with the other members of Students for Peace and Global Justice, had measurable impacts on the local community.

Professor to Muse on Movies During VPR's Annual Oscar 'Switchboard'

By Lee Ann Cox
Article published Mar 01, 2006

Film professor Hilary Neroni is still doing her homework. She's seen most of the movies nominated for Academy Awards this year, but by the time she joins filmmaker Jay Craven and Vermont Public Radio's Neal Charnoff on March 2 at 7 p.m. on his annual Oscar program, she'll be ready, slipping in *Transamerica* and *Munich* just under the wire.

For Neroni, whose work generally takes a more scholarly approach to film, going on Switchboard to analyze the Oscars is pure fun. "I watch (the Academy Awards) every single year," said Neroni, acknowledging that many people she knows eschew Hollywood's glitzy self-tribute. "I just love them. It's a great celebration of the movies and just a wonderful spectacle."

Her picks over time, Neroni admits, have been a bit disappointing. "I'm always terrible," she laughs. "At least the ones I wish would get it never do."

With that caveat, here are a few of Neroni's thoughts on this year's Oscars:

- **Best Picture**: Should go to *Good Night, and Good Luck*. "It has an expressive style that you just don't see very often in films that make it into this category. It would be a nod to this kind of filmmaking that might encourage more in the future." Probably will go to *Brokeback Mountain*. "The Academy tends to choose this kind of sweeping, sentimental film."
- **Strongest Category**: Best supporting actress. "This is the category with the strongest films and the most interesting performances."
- **Jon Stewart as Host**: "An edgy choice. You have to be really daring to be good. There's so much pressure to be safe but (hosts) really have to be on top of their game and not be afraid of being censored. It's a fine line."

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Events Celebrate International Women's Day

By The View Staff
Article published Mar 01, 2006

A number of events are scheduled in celebration of International Women's Day on March 8, a day for commemorating and celebrating nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

"The World at Work: Women," a collection of photographs, will be on display outside 427 Waterman from March 6 to 10. The photographs, along with "The Spark of Activism," testimony from members of UVM's community about what led them to become involved in causes of social justice and equlity, will travel to each of the following events on March 8:

- 7:30 a.m.: International Women's Day Breakfast, Waterman Manor, $3
- 3:30 p.m.: "Struggling for Gender Justice in an Unequal World," Marsh Lounge, Billings
- 7 p.m.: Film: "The Take," Campus Center Theatre, Billings.
- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.: "Take a Moment," Billings. Hope for Women will provide cards, envelopes and postage free to any person who wishes to stop and take a moment to send a card to a woman they admire.

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Student Conference to Tackle Race and Gender

By The View Staff
Article published Mar 01, 2006

ALANA U.S. Ethnic Studies and Women's and Gender Studies will host a student conference on race and gender on March 4 in 427 Waterman. Seven students, both undergraduate and graduate, will present their research ranging from "Religion in Jamaica: Ideas of Race and Resistance" to "Mixed Messages: Commodification, Movies, and Rap."

Following a catered lunch free to all registered attendees, Beverly Singer, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, will give the keynote address, "We the People and Landscapes of Native America." Those interested in attending should register by March 1 by calling Mary Driscoll: 656-4282 or Stella Moyser: 656-2263.

The conference schedule follows:

9 a.m.: Registration and Coffee

9:30 a.m.: Panel/Discussion: Issues of Nation and Race

- Courtney Iverson: "The Disempowerment of Native American Women"
- Lila Specker: "Religion in Jamaica. Ideas of Race and Resistance"
- Christian Reifsteck: "An Exception in Law; an Exception in Humanity: The Infinite Gap of the War on Terror"

11 a.m.: Coffee Break

11:15 a.m.: Panel / Discussion: Sexuality, Gender and Race in Film, Music, and Literature

- Ruthie Carlson: "The Mystification of Manhattan"
- Jake Meany: "Mixed Messages: Commodification, Movies, and Rap"
- Eric Siegel: "The Queer Effects of Textual Representation in Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons*"
- Travis Vogan: "In Other Words, I Am Becoming: *Beneath the Underdog*, *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, and Charles Mingus' Reformulation of the Racial Symbolic Order"

1:15 p.m.: Lunch

2:15 p.m.: Keynote Address by Beverly Singer, associate professor of anthropology and Native American studies, University of New Mexico, "We the People and Landscapes of Native America"

3:15 p.m.: Concluding Remarks

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NOTABLES

March 1, 2006

Publications and Presentations

Dr. Mary Cushman, associate professor of medicine, is the program committee chair of the American Heart Association's 46th Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention in association with the Council on Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Metabolism in Phoenix on March. 2. At the four-day conference, Cushman and **Nancy Jenny**, research assistant professor of pathology, will participate in a panel presentation titled, "Comparison of Multiple Inflammation Markers in the Prediction of Cardiovascular Disease in Older Men and Women: The Cardiovascular Health Study." In addition, Cushman, **Russell Tracy**, professor of pathology and biochemistry, and **J. Peter Durda**, senior researcher/analyst in pathology, will participate in a panel presentation titled, "Polymorphisms in the CRP Gene Are Associated with Plasma C-Reactive Protein Levels and Cardiovascular Events: The Cardiovascular Health Study."

Loka Losambe, professor of English, explores African subjectivity and its representation in African literature in a collection of essays titled, “Borderline Movements in African Fiction (Africa World Press)." Through an analysis of the novels of such authors as Chinua Achebe, Mongo Beti, and Mbulelo Mzamane, Losambe identifies the hybrid and borderline identities of African societies negotiating between Africa’s pre-colonial tradition and Western values.

Wolfgang Mieder, professor and chairperson of the Department of German and Russian, authored of four articles published in Germany, Russia, and Spain. His article on "Mitten im Strom soll man die Pferde nicht wechseln" appeared in *Zeitschrift für germanistische Linguistik* and deals with the history and dissemination of the American proverb, "don't swap horses in mid-stream." The paper on "Zu den sprichwörtlichen Aphorismen von Werner Ehrenforth" interprets the proverbial aphorisms of the modern German writer, Werner Ehreforth, and was published in *Nauchnyi vestnik* in Russia. In addition, there is an article on "`Luftschlösser bauen': Traditionelle und innovative Funktion eines redensartlichen Wunschbildes" that appeared in Spain in *Lo ajeno en lo propio* and investigates the origin and meaning of the internationally known proverbial expression, "to build castles in the air." An article on "Frases proverbiales en las cartas de Abigail Adams" was published in *Paremia*, a Spanish yearbook of proverb studies, showing that many of Abigail Adams' letters are informed by traditional proverbs.

February 22, 2006

Publications and Presentations

Dr. Edward Krawitt, professor of medicine, published a prestigious Medical Progress Review article entitled, "Autoimmune Hepatitis," in the January 5 *New England Journal of Medicine*. A leader in the field of chronic hepatitis research, Krawitt was also lead author of an article entitled, “Peginterferon alfa-2b and ribavirin for treatment-refractory chronic hepatitis C,” in the August 2005 *Journal of Hepatology*. In that study, he and his co-authors, which included **Takamaru Ashikaga**, director of medical biostatistics and biometry, and **Dr. Nicholas Ferrentino**, associate professor of medicine, found that as many as half of individuals with chronic hepatitis C who did not previously achieve a disease remission with previous treatment, can successfully respond to a regimen that includes a long-acting form of the drug interferon.

Jennifer Lussier, a former UVM psychiatry pre-doctoral fellow, published a paper entitled, "A meta-analysis on voucher-based reinforcement therapy for substance use disorders," in the January issue of journal *Addictions*. Voucher-based reinforcement therapy was developed at UVM by **Stephen Higgins**,